

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: FURTHER GOI VIEWS ON JOURNALISTS AND CENSORSHIP GUIDELINES

1. IN COURSE OF HIS CALL ON MEA SPOKESMAN HAKSAR AUGUST 8 TO PROTEST EXPULSION OF AP'S CODY, ACTING PA SOUGHT TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITY GOI EXERCISING GREATER FOREBEARANCE IN APPLICATION OF CENSORSHIP TO FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS. EMBOFF OPINED THAT CURRENT RIGIDITY AND EXPULSION ACTIONS HAD EFFECT OF FOCUSING MEDIA ON THESE ASPECTS OF CURRENT SITUATION AND DIVERTING ATTENTION FROM OTHER MATTERS, E.G., GOI ECONOMIC PROGRAM ETC., WHICH MORE THOUGHTFUL JOOURNALISTS MIGHT OTHERWISE EXPLORE IN "THINK-PIECES." RESULTS OF LESS RIGIDITY IN TERMS OF GOI IMAGE ABROAD MIGHT THEREBY BE ENHANCED. THIS OFFERED ONLY AS PERSONAL OBSERVATION FROM ONE INFORMATION COLLAGUE TO ANOTHER AND BASED ON OUR COMMON EXPERIENCE THAT DOING BATTLE WITH MEDIA IN CURRENT MANNER USUALLY A LOSING GAME.

2. AS IN ACTING PAO'S LAST CONVERSATION WITH HAKSAR, HOWEVER, DESPITE THE CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE OF DISCUSSION AND THE SWEETNESS OF THE TEA AND COOKIES, IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT HAKSAR HAD NO ROOM
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FOR MANEUVER. DRAWING ON WHAT WERE PROBABLY HIS FIRM INSTRUC-

TIONS, HE FELL BACK EACH TIME ON THE LITANY OF THE LAW IS THE
LAW, CORRESPONDENTS ARE AWARE OF THE GUIDELINES AND MUST BE
PREPARED TO TAKE THE CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATIONS THEREOF.

3. COMMENT: WHEREVER GOI STRATEGY IN HANDLING OF FOREIGN MEDIA
IS BEING FORMULATED, IT APPEARS THAT THE INDIAN BUREAU-
CRACY HAS LITTLE VOICE IN THE PROCESS.
GILMORE

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